

U.S. Department of Education

**Staff Report
to the
Senior Department Official
on
Recognition Compliance Issues**

RECOMMENDATION PAGE

1. **Agency:** American Occupational Therapy Association (1952/2007)
(The dates provided are the date of initial listing as a recognized agency and the date of the agency's last grant of recognition.)
2. **Action Item:** Petition for Continued Recognition
3. **Current Scope of Recognition:** The accreditation of occupational therapy educational programs offering the professional master's degree, combined baccalaureate/master's degree, and occupational therapy doctorate (OTD) degree; the accreditation of occupational therapy assistant programs offering the associate degree or a certificate; and the accreditation of these programs offered via distance education.
4. **Requested Scope of Recognition:** Same as above.
5. **Date of Advisory Committee Meeting:** June, 2012
6. **Staff Recommendation:** Renew the agency's recognition for a period of five years.
7. **Issues or Problems:** None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGENCY

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is a professional association of more than 42,000 occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and students of occupational therapy.

The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is a programmatic accreditor. ACOTE membership is voluntary and its principal purpose is to accredit higher education programs.

ACOTE accreditation is required for access to the Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) Program which was established via the Disadvantaged Minority Health Improvement Act of 1990, Section 737 of the Public Health Service Act. As a programmatic accreditor, ACOTE is not required to meet the separate and independent requirements in the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

ACOTE currently accredits 297 programs (4 Doctoral-Degree-Level for OT, 143 Masters-Degree-Level for OT, 150 Occupational Therapy Assistant) located in institutions of higher learning throughout the United States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Recognition History

The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) was first recognized by the U.S. Commissioner of Education as one of several review committees under the umbrella of the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (CAHEA) of the American Medical Association in 1952. The last review of CAHEA that included ACOTE occurred in May 1988, and resulted in a grant of continued recognition for four years.

CAHEA subsequently disbanded and AOTA elected not to become a part of the new organization but to establish itself as an independent accrediting agency known as the AOTA Accreditation Committee. On January 1, 1994, the AOTA Accreditation Committee changed its name to the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) and, functioning independently of CAHEA, established the ACOTE as a standing committee of the AOTA

Executive Board. The agency has been periodically reviewed and continued recognition has been granted after each review.

ACOTE was last reviewed for continued recognition at the Fall 2006 National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI or Committee) meeting. At that meeting, the Committee recommended and the Secretary concurred that the agency's recognition be renewed for five years.

In conjunction with the current review of the agency's renewal petition and supporting documentation, Department staff conducted an observation of an appeals panel in October 2011.

PART II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The agency meets the requirements of the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

PART III: THIRD PARTY COMMENTS

The Department did not receive any written third-party comments regarding this agency.